

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
17 October 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: SBAS Applicants

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 17 October 2012, pages 59-60)

QUESTION No.: SI-25

Senator RYAN: Going to back to the SBAS applicants in particular, when we talked about this in May estimates, I was told that no transitional Commonwealth funding arrangements had been put in place. Is that still the case? There have been no transitional elements put in place?

Ms Butler: That is correct.

Senator RYAN: We were hoping to have them underway by August, even though the old scheme finished on 30 June. It is now 17 October. Have you been advised yet, at any point, when you can finalise this process by making recommendations to the delegate to make decisions?

Ms Butler: No, I haven't been advised.

Senator RYAN: So there is no advice within the department. It is not just this one.

Ms Butler: No.

Senator RYAN: Have you received any contact from recipients of the previous program indicating financial stress—that they might be at risk of falling over, for lack of a better way of putting it? I think it was probably a legitimate expectation of theirs that they would have had an answer by now.

Ms Launder: We have had contact with the recipients through the previous program through their final reporting processes that have been taking place over the last couple of months. Through that process some of them have indicated to us that they are winding back some of the services that they are delivering, or changing the nature of the delivery of some of those services. Some of them are looking at losing some of their staff. We have had communication from one particular BEC that they were looking into some alternate restructuring processes for their organisation, and through that process they were referring some of their calls to a neighbouring BEC.

Senator RYAN: Have the group that oversees this program and the previous program been keeping records of the feedback you have been getting from previous grant recipients and grant applicants about the impact of this delay when they contact you—you have not contacted them, I appreciate—saying, 'We're looking at restructuring, we're looking at sacking a few people, we're looking at changing our service profile', have you kept records of that?

Ms Launder: That was a particular question that was on the final reporting template, so in that respect we do have a record.

Senator RYAN: What was the question?

Ms Launder: It was just to advise us of the process going forward for them as a BEC. I would like to take on notice the exact question.

Senator RYAN: Sure. -----.

ANSWER

The question on the final reporting template was: 'What will be the impact on your BEC once funding under the program has ceased?'